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TAGS: [PREL](#) [EUN](#) [PGOV](#) [ECON](#) [ENRG](#) [MARR](#) [SI](#)  
SUBJECT: EUR A/S FRIED URGES SWIFT COORDINATED U.S.-EU  
ACTION ON KOSOVO IN BILATERAL MEETINGS IN SLOVENIA

Classified By: CDA Maryruth Coleman for reasons 1.4 (b,d)

Summary

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11. (C) In each of his bilateral meetings in Ljubljana January 10-11, EUR A/S Dan Fried discussed the U.S.-EU Summit, saying that it is likely to be in June and planning is underway. In meetings with the PM's advisors and the MFA, they identified possible themes for the summit as regional issues, i.e., Kosovo; TEC; financial stability; climate change; and JHA issues. A/S Fried shared USG thinking on Kosovo and warned against delaying Kosovo's coordinated declaration of independence (CDI). End Summary.

Lunch with MFA State Secretary Sinkovec Focuses on Balkans, Possible U.S.-EU Summit Themes

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12. (C) At a January 10 lunch he hosted for A/S Fried, MFA State Secretary Matjaz Sinkovec stressed that Slovenia's priority is to bring all the Balkan countries closer to the EU. He said there needs to be some kind of "Marshall Plan" to help Kosovo get on its feet, and mentioned a possible donors conference for Kosovo later this spring. Fried asked if Slovenia will recognize Kosovo in the first wave along with the four large EU states. Sinkovec acknowledged that this has not yet been decided. He noted that Slovenia's Parliament must approve the recognition and the GOS cannot simply announce its intent to recognize. The Parliament, however, is supportive of Kosovo independence, and a special session could be arranged quickly. On other Balkans issues, Sinkovec urged the U.S. to weigh in with the Greeks, asking them to be as flexible as possible on the Macedonia name issue. Fried responded that the U.S. cannot roll the Greeks.

He said that American negotiator Matthew Nimitz will be going to the region soon, and the Macedonians need to work seriously with him. Sinkovec said PM Jansa and Macedonian PM Gruevski talk frequently, and he promised to ask Jansa to press Gruevski to do what is necessary to find a compromise. Sinkovec also reported that Jansa is particularly concerned about the situation in Bosnia. Fried said he is less worried now than he was a couple of months ago, suggesting that RS PM Dodik doesn't really want to destroy Dayton.

13. (C) Fried, Sinkovec and MFA America's Division head, Ambassador Roman Kirn, discussed clusters of possible U.S.-EU summit themes. One focus is on regional political developments, including the Balkans, the Middle East (if the substance permits), the common challenge of Russia, and other hot issues of the day. Another cluster is economic: progress in the Transatlantic Economic Council (TEC), energy cooperation in both its climate change and geostrategic

dimensions, and commitment to free trade. Kirn mentioned that launch of phase II of the Air Transport Agreement and progress under the TEC could lead to two or three concrete deliverables. A third cluster concerns Justice and Home Affairs issues, in which agreement on data privacy principles and ratification of the U.S.-EU Extradition and Mutual Legal Assistance Treaties could constitute genuine achievements in law enforcement and counterterrorism cooperation. Sinkovec pressed for a date for the summit as soon as possible to facilitate preparations. Fried said that in all likelihood it would be in June.

14. (C) On other topics, Fried mentioned that the U.S. hopes to have a statement on Afghanistan at the NATO Summit, and said we will push hard for force generation even as the U.S. increases its own troops. He urged Slovenia to reorganize its deployment in Western Afghanistan into operational mentor liaison teams (OMLTs). Sinkovec replied that as of January 1 Slovenia has seven personnel in an OMLT with Italy and will increase that number to ten in February. He promised to get back to U.S. on the larger question of reorganizing the rest of the Slovene deployment into OMLTs. Fried asked if the EU can do more to support the Nabucco pipeline to diversify sources of natural gas and increase Europe's energy security.

Sinkovec and Kirn worried that the EU hasn't been able to develop a unified energy policy. All agreed that the EU and U.S. need to coordinate closely to deal with possible fallout from the Kosovo independence declaration, such as punitive Serbian economic measures or Russian recognition of Abkhazia. Fried noted that we need both to embrace the Serbs and yet tell them that they don't have a license to provoke -- and that won't be easy. He also warned that it will be necessary to let the Russians know quickly and firmly that we will not accept aggressive moves in Abkhazia.

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President Turk Presses for Elaboration of the Basis for Kosovo Independence

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15. (C) At a meeting at the President's office on January 10, newly inaugurated President Danilo Turk told A/S Fried that Kosovo independence should go forward, but that a waterproof conceptual case for its new status must be drafted and publicized to demonstrate why it is not a precedent for other regional conflicts. Turk argued that Serbian violence against Kosovo Albanians and the latter's need for self-protection constitutes an existential basis for independence. He asserted that while there is a creeping interpretation that UNSC Resolution 1244 was meant to protect Serbia from Kosovo breaking away, in fact it deliberately avoids mention of Serbia and does not at all preclude independence. Turk said it would be very useful if the U.S., EU and United Nations could issue documents in early February detailing the international community's multiple efforts to resolve the Kosovo issue, and setting out in a careful and precise way the reasons why independence for Kosovo is legitimate. He remarked that he is "slightly worried" that there is still considerable work to do on this.

16. (C) Fried thanked the President for his thoughtful proposal but suggested that it would be very hard to get such a document through the UN. He stated that in the real world the Kosovo situation is unsustainable and the past is not recoverable. The key, he said, is to maintain U.S.-EU solidarity. By acting jointly, we convey a political legitimacy because we are the centers of the democratic world. He stressed, however, that we must move rapidly after the February 3 Serbian second-round elections, as delay will only make things more difficult. Kosovo PM Thaci, he suggested, won't surprise as long as he sees progress being made. Nevertheless, Fried warned, we need a large group of nations -- fifteen to twenty -- to recognize Kosovo simultaneously. He cautioned that Russia will be counting how many nations step forward together.

17. (C) Turk raised the President's trip to the Middle East and asked whether the U.S. could convince the Israelis to stop building settlements. Fried responded that PM Olmert has to get a handle on this issue but insisted that both parties have to keep negotiating and not use the other side's failures as an excuse for inaction. He assured Turk that President Bush and the Secretary are working very hard to assist the parties to make progress. Fried concluded that we are hopeful for some kind of Middle East agreement, but we need EU help. In mentioning a possible U.S.-EU Summit in June, he reported that President Bush enjoyed his visit to Slovenia and that the U.S. appreciates what Slovenia is doing as an ally.

State Secretary for EU on Kosovo, U.S.-EU Summit  
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18. (C) In their January 11 meeting, Janez Lenarcic, State Secretary of the Government Office of European Affairs, noted

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that there had been two developments since they had last met in July 2007 that would influence Slovenia's EU Presidency: the signing of the Lisbon Treaty and Kosovo. Lenarcic commented that the ratification process could be affected by what Slovenia does in its Presidency. A/S Fried said that the U.S. wants to see a strong Europe and believed the Treaty would be good because it would strengthen the EU, which would be beneficial for transatlantic relations. Lenarcic urged A/S Fried to make those comments publicly, as they could contribute to successful ratification in Ireland, which is a particular concern.

19. (C) A/S Fried reviewed USG thinking and concerns on Kosovo, and Lenarcic assured A/S Fried that Slovenia sees Kosovo the way the U.S. does. They agreed on the need to show resolve because the Serbs would exploit any willingness to appease them. Lenarcic suggested that USG lawyers should draw up a paper making the political and legal case of how/why Kosovo is not a precedent. He worried that although we are saying Kosovo is unique, we needed to build the case. He drew the parallel to Nagorno-Karabakh. A/S Fried countered that there was a negotiating process in Nagorno-Karabakh, but he took his point. He cautioned, however, that even such a paper would not end the debate - the EU and U.S. would have to maintain their position.

110. (C) A/S Fried and Lenarcic agreed on the main elements of

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a U.S.-EU Summit, and on the need to start developing them. Lenarcic concurred that Kosovo and regional issues would be a major element, as well as advancing TEC. He suggested that it would be appropriate to include financial stability, which is becoming a big issue in the EU and will figure prominently in the March European Council. He also asserted that climate change is an inevitable topic for the Summit.

Balkan Issues Discussion With PM's Foreign Policy Advisor  
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11. (C) A/S Fried focused primarily on Balkans issues during his meeting with Prime Minister Jansa's foreign policy advisor, Andrej Rahten, on January 11. Fried stated that it was fortunate that Slovenia was chairing the EU at the time when the Kosovo issue will be resolved. Slovenia, he said, knows the region, the people and the issues. He predicted that managing the issue will take a lot of work, there will be lots of obstacles, and the Russians will make things difficult; but it will get done, and closing this chapter will be as important for the Serbs as for the Kosovars. Rahten raised Macedonia, commenting that PM Gruevski sometimes sounds like Serbian PM Kostunica, and that the Macedonians have to be more constructive. Fried again mentioned that Nimitz will be going to the region in two

weeks and that it would be helpful for Slovenia to convince the Macedonians to put a new offer on the table. Rahten reported that Jansa and Grueski talk on a weekly basis and that EU Enlargement Commissioner Rehn is working with Slovenia to persuade Macedonia that the approach Nimitz has proposed is the best. Rahten emphasized that Slovenia strongly supports a NATO invitation at Bucharest for all three candidates. Fried agreed that a strategic case for this can be made.

#### Eating with Editors - A Slovene Sampler

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¶12. (C) In a dinner on January 10 with editors from the leading Slovene dailies and TV outlets, A/S Fried provided an in-depth look into U.S. foreign policy in Europe, with a particular focus on the Western Balkans. The editors, in turn, offered an unfiltered Slovene perspective on Kosovo, Croatia, and Russia. The conversation touched upon Croatia at several points and the editors repeatedly stressed that the border disputes with its southern neighbor have deep emotional, historical, and strategic roots. Citing sticking points in international law and a concern for setting precedence, the editors expressed wariness regarding recognition of Kosovo's independence and were not willing to accept a comparison of Slovenia's and Kosovo's independence movements. On Russia, the editors highlighted a concern amongst the Slovene public that disagreements between Washington and Moscow could escalate into a broader conflict and questioned U.S. motives on issues such as missile defense.

#### Dining with Diplomats - Kosovo is Main Course

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¶13. (C) The January 11 dinner hosted by Charge with senior MFA officials, including Political Director Mitja Drobnic and directors of four regional divisions and the Division for Security Policy, also focused on Kosovo. Leon Marc, Director of the South-Eastern Europe Division, said that Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic had visited Ljubljana that day and had nearly begged the EU Presidency not to address Kosovo prior to the Serbian elections. According to Marc, Jeremic stated that if the EU could help get President Boris Tadic reelected by delaying action on Kosovo until after the elections, the GOS will deliver what is needed on Kosovo. Ambassador Kirn noted that Jeremic reflects a predominant state of mind among the Serbian political elite: concern that the intense scrutiny by the international community on Kosovo is aggravating the situation. Marc asserted that it is critical that the EU find a way to restore Serbia's faith in Europe, noting that 78% of Serbs have never traveled abroad.

¶14. (C) Drobnic speculated that it will take Serbia about six months to get over the loss of Kosovo, and he was confident that in the end Serbia will be pragmatic. Kirn questioned why it had been so much easier for Montenegro to let go of its claims over Kosovo and speculated that because of the strong similarities in Montenegrin and Serbian cultures, it must be a question of leadership. Stanislav Vidovic, Director of the Security Policy Division, pointed to more practical causes, stating that the role of organized crime

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was also a factor. Vidovic asserted that while organized crime was forced to move outside of Montenegro's borders to expand and therefore allowed the country to embrace the international community, organized crime in Serbia has found plenty of room for growth within Serbia's national boundaries and thus the country has remained insular.

¶15. (C) The Slovenian diplomats also provided their insights into the Slovenia - Croatia maritime border dispute, stating that Croatia is motivated by the desire to exert some influence over Slovenia. In addition, Drobnic claimed that Croatia's economic interests are served by shutting off

Slovenia's access to international waters, hurting Slovenia's port and advantaging Croatia's northern port of Rijeka. Drobnic also cited Croatia's desire to maintain a common maritime border with Italy.

¶16. (U) EUR DAS Gerber has cleared this cable on behalf of A/S Fried and EUR.  
COLEMAN